

VOLKSWAGEN GOLF ESTATE 1.4 TSI

By Jim Mc Cauley

It may not always have kept pace with the hatchback, model for model, but the 5th generation of the Golf estate is now available alongside the 7th generation hatch. A respectable premium of just



£765 over the equivalent 5-door hatchback provides a more versatile solution for those in need of greater luggage space.

In time honoured Volkswagen fashion, there are more engine choices than trim levels with a range of four petrol units and three diesels, allowing for a very precise match to individual requirements.

Test choice was the 1.4 litre TSI petrol model driving through its standard 6-speed manual gearbox. Rated at 122 PS, the benchmark 0-62 mph time is achieved in 9.7 seconds while top speed is given as 127 mph. On-road, and the surprise is the agility of the car and indeed its

top gear response at normal road speeds, highlighting just how flexible the power unit is. The estate also benefits from being built on the group's new MQB platform which helps make it 105 kg lighter than its predecessor.

Suspension is supportive but not intrusive, coping for load carrying demands while trim levels exactly mirror those of the similarly badged hatchback models. In this case, the car was in mid-range SE trim offering all the equipment and convenience that anyone could require.

Being an estate, its load carrying ability is at the top of the list and a remote release conveniently located at the tailgate automatically drops the rear seat backs to speed up loading. The boot floor and side panels can be moved / removed to facilitate different load requirements adding to the estate's versatility. Load volume with all seats in position is increased by 20% over the preceding model to 605 litres, while maximum load volume is also increased to 1,620 litres.

All models in the range feature the company's 'BlueMotion' stop / start technology with battery regeneration, seven airbags, Bluetooth connectivity, DAB digital radio with 5.8 inch infotainment screen, iPod connection and XDS





electronic differential for increased cornering performance.

SE trim raises the bar substantially for a modest premium of £935 over the range entry S model. The mid range model comes with the company's ADC automatic distance control with Front Assist and City Emergency Braking – essentially low speed automatic braking – 16-inch alloy wheels, automatic functioning of

lights and wipers, Driver Alert system and a pre-crash occupant protection system. The SE also introduces Driver Profile Selection, whereby the driver can select one of four modes, Eco, Normal, Sport and Individual, each of which alters the throttle mapping and engine management parameters with the option to further tweak settings in Individual mode.

This is in addition to the other upmarket equipment items including semi-automatic air conditioning, all-round electric windows, multi-function computer, speed sensitive power steering, roof rails and emergency spare wheel.

Overall, the estate derivative sits comfortably within the Golf range in terms of performance, equipment levels and price without sacrificing any of the qualities of the benchmark hatch. Economy-wise, the 1.4 TSI estate in SE trim has a given combined fuel consumption of 53.3 mpg, and with a CO2 emissions of 124 gms/km is in Band D for annual car tax. The model is listed at £20,620 with group 14E insurance in the 50 category ratings and is covered by Volkswagen's comprehensive 3-year / 60,000 mile warranty.

